

MEDIA RELEASE

**Attention: News Director
For Immediate Release
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**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
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**FOUR-TIME CONVICTED CRACK DEALER SENTENCED
TO 21 YEARS AND 10 MONTHS**

**OTHER DEFENDANT SENTENCED TO 3 YEARS AND 10 MONTHS FOR LYING
ON BEHALF OF THE CRACK DEALER**

David L. Huber, United States Attorney for the Western District of Kentucky, and Paul Vido, Special Agent in Charge of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), Louisville Field Division, jointly announced that today that **JA'MEL TRAMONT SMITHERS**, age 23, of 5205 Russett Blvd. #8, Louisville, Kentucky, and **KEVIN HUNTER**, age 23, 1402 Bicknell Avenue Building 49, Louisville, Kentucky, **were sentenced** in United States District Court, Louisville, Kentucky. **Smithers** had previously pled guilty to possessing with the intent to distribute 50 grams or more of cocaine base, commonly known as "crack" cocaine, and cocaine. **Hunter** had previously pled guilty to being an accessory after the fact - based on his role in lying during a state parole revocation hearing and stating that the drugs belonged to him.

United States District Court Judge Charles R. Simpson, III, sentenced **Smithers** to 21 years and 10 months imprisonment, followed by 10 years supervised release. Judge Simpson sentenced **Hunter** to 3 years and 10 months imprisonment, followed by 3 years supervised release. **There is no parole in the federal judicial system.**

Smithers, from July 2003 through September 2003, was convicted of four state felony drug

trafficking charges. Two of those convictions also included wanton endangerment and tampering with evidence.

Smithers pled guilty in November 2006 to the drug charges pursuant to a Plea Agreement. He admitted, in open court and through the Plea Agreement, that on June 22, 2005, a Kentucky Probation and Parole Officer conducted a home visit. She initiated the visit following her receipt of information that **Smithers** had rented a motel room in which marijuana had been found packaged for sale. The Kentucky Probation and Parole Officer and a Louisville Metro Police (LMPD) Sergeant made the home visit. When they knocked on the door, **Smithers** invited them inside. Officers immediately smelled the odor of burnt marijuana. The Probation and Parole Officer, along with another Probation Officer, conducted a walk-through of the apartment and discovered a partially burnt marijuana blunt and a digital scale with white powder residue on **Smithers'** dresser in his bedroom.

The Probation and Parole Officer advised **Smithers** that she believed she had reasonable grounds to believe he was in violation of his probation and was going to conduct a more thorough search. Officers found a shoebox in the corner of the bedroom behind a chest. Inside the box, they found a pair of pants with three stacks of \$1,000 bundled and five bags of suspected cocaine powder - each weighing approx. 3 ounces. A search of a closet revealed approximately 2 ounces of suspected crack cocaine, a small bag of marijuana, \$120 in the pocket of a pair of jeans, and \$495 in a pants pocket of pants on the floor. The pants on the floor also included **Smithers'** Kentucky driver's license and other documents in **Smithers'** name.

Law enforcement submitted the suspected cocaine and cocaine base for chemical analysis. The Kentucky State Police Laboratory conducted the examination and prepared a report which indicated that the suspected cocaine base tested positive for cocaine base. The report showed a

weight of 58.45 grams for the cocaine base. Forensic examination of the suspected powder cocaine revealed a positive result for cocaine hydrochloride. The report indicated a total weight of 401.26 grams of cocaine. **Smithers** possessed the cocaine and cocaine base (*i.e.*, "crack" cocaine), with the intent to distribute the substances. The drugs had an estimated street value of \$45,000.

Hunter previously pled guilty in November 2006 under a Plea Agreement to the felony charge of accessory after the fact. The underlying crime involved the possession with intent to distribute 50 grams or more of a mixture or substance containing cocaine base, commonly referred to as "crack cocaine."

Hunter admitted that he had previously lied in Jefferson Circuit Court to protect **Ja'mel Smithers** during **Smithers'** parole revocation hearing conducted in Jefferson Circuit Court, Division 4, on September 15, 2005. During that hearing, **Hunter** appeared and testified that the cocaine found in **Smithers'** bedroom belonged to him (**Hunter**). **Hunter** further testified that he is a drug dealer and that he had paid \$1,500 for the cocaine. He stated that he knew **Smithers** due to the fact that he dated **Smithers'** sister. Prior to the parole revocation hearing, **Hunter** had been approached by a member of **Smithers'** family. The family member offered to pay **Hunter** to take responsibility for the drugs. The family member approached **Hunter** because **Hunter** had no prior criminal record and **Smithers** was facing a mandatory life sentence.

Assistant United States Attorney Jo E. Lawless prosecuted the case. The Louisville Metro Police Department, Kentucky Department of Probation and Parole, and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives conducted the investigation.

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